

Sussex Gardeners deck Lewes, Del.'s Zwaanendael Museum for the holidays

(DOVER, Del.—Dec. 2, 2015)—Lewes, Del.'s Zwaanendael Museum is dressed up for the holidays, inside and out, thanks to the Sussex Gardeners, a local garden group. Visitors will find festive touches throughout the museum, many incorporating swans, as befitting the word "Zwaanendael" which means "Valley of Swans" in the Dutch language. The decorations, which will be on display through Jan. 3, 2016, will also be featured in two special programs—"Hospitality Night," which will be held on Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015 from 5 to 8 p.m.; and "Tour Zwaanendael Museum" which will be held on Saturday, Dec. 5, 2015 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Members of the Sussex Gardeners who helped decorate the Zwaanendael Museum. From top left: Willa Jones, Ann Case, Judy Pinsdorf, Janet Point, Kathy Ackerman, Karen Combe, Martha Last and Donna Fellows.

Presented in conjunction with the Lewes Chamber of Commerce's

[Hospitality Night in Historic Lewes](#), “Hospitality Night” will present a warm and inviting evening in which Colonial lanterns will light the walkway to the museum, and activities will include historical interpreters, dressed in Colonial attire, demonstrating the activities of Colonial merchants, plus music and seasonal refreshments.



Zwaanendael means “Valley of Swans”—and that theme is reflected in the museum’s holiday décor.

The second program, “Tour Zwaanendael Museum,” held in conjunction with the Lewes Historical Society’s [Christmas Tour of Lewes](#), will provide visitors with an opportunity to explore this historic museum which showcases the Lewes-area’s maritime, military and social history.

Founded in 1937 as the Nassau Garden Committee, the 40-plus-member Sussex Gardeners meet at 1 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at All Saints Episcopal Church, 18 Olive Ave. in Rehoboth Beach, Del.

The [Zwaanendael Museum](#), located at 102 Kings Highway in Lewes, Del., is open Wednesday thru Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., from Nov. 1 to March 31; and Tuesday thru Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Sunday, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., from April 1 to Oct. 31. Admission is free and open to the public. For additional information, call 302-645-1148.

The museum was built in 1931 to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the state's first European colony, Swanendael, established by the Dutch along Hoorn Kill (present-day Lewes-Rehoboth Canal) in 1631. Designed by E. William Martin (architect of Legislative Hall and the Hall of Records in Dover), the museum is modeled after the town hall in Hoorn, the Netherlands, and features a stepped facade gable with carved stonework and decorated shutters.



Zwaanendael Museum

Museum exhibits and presentations provide a showcase for Lewes-area maritime, military and social history. Current exhibits include "[A Seaborne Citizenry: The DeBraak and Its Atlantic World](#)" which tells the story of His Majesty's Sloop of War DeBraak, a British warship that sank off the Delaware coast on May 25, 1798; and "[Delaware and the War of 1812](#)" which examines the service and sacrifice of Delawareans of 1812 to 1815, and the important role that the state played in a conflict that helped shape the development of the United States as a nation.

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